## GOV. TAYLOR'S MESSAGE

The Last Communication on State Affairs by the Retiring Governor.

HIS ADMINISTRATION REVIEWED.

Numerous Subjects Discussed and A Number of Recommendations Made.

Below we publish the final message of Gov. Robert L. Taylor to the Forty-sixth General Assembly.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Forty-sixth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee—Gentlemen: Tennessee has achieved wonderrul luceess in material growth in the past quarter century. \*\* was "grim-visaged war had smoothed its wrinkled front," it left naught but wasted fields and devastated bomes. Desolation reigned supreme, and there was nothing left but the soil and the determination of a people decimated in numbers but strong in purpose to retrieve their lost fortunes. The credit of the State was ruined, its treasury empty, its school-houses in ashes, and all its inens in chaotic condition. For years our people have struggled to restore prosperity to e commonwealth, to rebuild its waste places and start it again upon the road to fortune When I came into the executive office in 1887, I found our finances in the severe straits incident to the incomplete processes of readjustment that had been set on foot and with a seemingly inadequate revenue; but the plantof funding has been resolutely carried to practical completion every obligation has been met punctually, and public confidence in the State's perfect ability to meet every demand has been completely established. The necessity for negotiating loans has been gradually diminished until at the beginning of my second term I felt justified in predicting to your predecessors that the achievements of the few preceding years foreshadowed the possibility that two years more would see Tennessee emancipated from the thralldom of unweiltly obligations. How well that prediction has been verified is found in the happy announcement I now make that this present hour witnesses for the first time since the debt was funded the ability of the State to meet its semi-annual interest without the necessity of borrowing a dollar. While successive Legislatures and officials have labored wisely and earnestly to meet this end, candor and justice compel me to say that its thus early accomplishment is due to the econ wisdom, energy and watchfulness of our present Comptroller, Hon. J. W. Allen, and to the financial ability of our exceelint Treasurer, Hon, M. F. House. The figures of their reports tell the tale. Assessments were never before managed with more ability, and collections were never enforced so rigidly. The law has been spiendidly executed to the letter, and I hardship has resulted anywhere it is due to rigorous laws and not to the officers sworn to their faithful execution. An increase in the revenues of above \$400,000, and a delinquency of only \$55,05 in an assessment of millions, is the measure of the superior efficiency employed and tells in trumpet tones how well these faithful officials have served their people. One of them has acquired the anomalous reputation of being the most liberal man with his own means and the most careful with the State's money ever known in her capitol.

During the past two years there has been an increase in receipts of \$416,508.78, and in the ar years an increase of \$128,000,000 in taxable perty. This increase is not for one year -it comes to stay and to afford a perpetall source of revenue -and if the methods and rgies now being used are continued, the day t when Tennessee will be without a debt. It will be observed also that our loan account is decreased \$245,000, and that the revenues now in sight will rutire the balance owing of \$459,797.10, and the probability is that the small loan to be negotiated next July will be the last. The reports of the financial officers are so full and explicit, and abound in such wholesome suggestions to your honorable bodies that I deem it unnecessary to recapituate further. I would carnestly recommend bey do so richly in results, be not disturbed, I t strengthened by the endorsement of the representatives of the people. I need not admonish your honorable bodies that the tri niations through which we have reachedsight of safe harbor is a warning to strict evon omy. I should feel that the sweetest fruits of all the effort and privations of the past would be lost if the present policies are not prosecuted until the foundations of a sinking fund are securely made for the extinguishment of the principal of the debt. Touching the matter and manner of the collection of revenues, we seem to be upon a better road than we have ever traveled. Exactly equal assessment laws exist only ideality. You cannot hope to adjust every species of property to its precise relative value, and neither can you stifle the voice of the grumbler. You cannot expect to have all the assessors read the laws alike, nor collectors to work with equal energy. Approximate perfection only is possible and when the results re-veal such approximation, it would seem to be wise to rest there.

THE PENITENTIABY. The recent destruction by fire of the work-shops at the main prison opens the way to a consummation demanded by every considerastion, i. e., the removal of the penitentiary outside the limits of the city of Nashville. The only item in the consideration that is suscepti-ble to argument is that of expense, and the weighty reasons that will be pressed upon your attention by wise and patriotic men and women I would emphasize with my most emphision and arguments, the Commercial Club of this city, assigning unanswerable reasons for the removal I particularly amend to your attention.

The facility with which the extraordinary expenditures incurred in building our new asylums were met and the Bank of Tennesses obligations were taken up, amounting together to above a \$1,500,000, at a time when revenues bore small proportion to expenditures, fur nishes safe assurance that this work may be undertaken at this more favorable juncture without jeopardizing the credit of the State. The conditions of the lease and the interests of the lessees will not permit unnecessary delay in rebuilding, and whatever provision is made, haste in building must be a prime consideration If convicts are to be employed in the work a contract outside of the lease must be made with the lessees. The labor of convicts does not now belong to the State, but I doubt not the interests of the lessees being so largely involved they will be found ready to make any reasona-ble contract to release a number of convicts to the State for the rougher work of this under-

In my opinion there is not another interest with which your honorable bodies are charged that appeal so gravely to your attention as that of prison management, Fifteen hundred of our fellow-creatures are immured there, and thousands of hearts are bleeding and breaking for them. I have sought by all means that I have exerted to impress upon its managers and its inmates the idea of reformation. It should not be a place of punishment alone, but a place of reclamation. If the modern system of paroles and rewards for good conduct was inaugurated here it would work great good to the convicts, to society and to the State. I carneatly recommend that you Penitentiary Committees make inquiry into this matter and set on foot well-devised methods looking to reformation and reclamation. I desire to say in this conacction that the prisons have been excellently managed. The wonderful decrea e in the mortality record speaks eloquently in praise of the officials and the lessees and the general universal improvement to morals, resulting in better conduct, better iscipline, better work, fewer escapes, fewerd mutinies, less trouble and better results generally, furnish conclusive evidences of what infinitely better results would follow a well-con-sidered system. Fifteen hundred wretched human beings appeal to you in their humiliation and the tears and anguish of thousands of our women and children, our friends and neighbors and kindred pitcously beseech you. In the name of God and humanity I have sought to do my duty mercifully towards my unfortunate fellow-man, and have felt that I have had no higher obligation upon me than to listen patiently to the appeals of their friends, their mothers and wives and children, and to afford such consolation as I could; and the conseiousness that I may have saved some being from dishenor and a career of crime to bless his family and society and save his own soul, ie the

weetest solace I carry with me into retirement. adjure you, gentlemen, to give this matter

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS. Our insane asylums are all in splendid condition and are doing a noble work . The recent dations provided and the avidity with which they were seized evinces the supreme need that existed for them. They hould be most liberally sustained. God's poor and those whom for some inscrutable purpose He has bereft of reason are the most holy charge upon the State.

The Tennessee Industrial School deserves more liberal sustenance. It is doing a great work and there could not be too much effort and means expended to reclaim and reform vayward children.

I had the honor to recommend to your prede-cessors the establishment of a reformatory institution for youthful criminals, and herewith renew it. It is cruel to send children to associate with criminals and educate them thu into crime. In the absence of any such provisions I have felt it a duty I owed to humanity and society to pardon children as fast as they arrived at the penitentiary. Doubtless ample vision could be made for them at the Industrial School, keeping them separated from the other inmates. It should not longer be neg-

Modern humanitarians have pressed their work so assiduously in recent years that the land is covered with charitable institutions for the amelioration of every phase of poverty, want and affliction. Tennessee is not in pace with the more advanced effort. She has been hampered for means, but she has not been entirely neglectful. These charities should have our first attention and aid.

The next venture we make into this benefi-cent field should be the establishment of a school for youthful imbeciles. Other States have them and it is found that by bringing them together and employing scientific age cies in their behalf many cures have followed These agencies are not ordinarily available throughout the country and the result is that many children are permitted to remain imbecile and degenerate into idiocy for lack of early expert attention and training. Such a school could doubtless be made nearly self-sustaining after a time, but it cannot be estab-lished and successfully started unless the State begins and fosters it.

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH. In making provision for the interests of the people of Tennessee the efficient support of the tate Board of Health should be carefully looked after. From a personal knowledge of its work, I can speak highly of its value, both it for the purpose of printing and disseminating in preventing the spread of disease in Tennes- maps and statistics and such matter of the see and in promoting the best character of immigration. It is also of great public utility by maintaining an efficient State weather service in co-operation with the Federal Government This board should be furnished with additional means for disseminating information among the people, and also for investigating the dis-eases of animals, by which damage is done to the public health.

EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS. While I have sought by all means in my wer to conserve the interests of the State and the people in every department that my supervision encompassed, I have been most especially auxious and diligent in promoting our educational system. When I came into office I relative to them, I desire to call your attention sist in making the occasion memorable and found our common schools languishing and the to the importance of encouraging and enlarging successful, there will be an opportunity to lay leading State university almost in ruins. There was a general apathy and lack of effort, superinduced by the failure of the schools to meet the wants of the people. The appointment of Hon. Frank M. Smith to be Superinident of Public Instruction breathed life into the expiring system. Under his intelligent direction the very best methods and expedients, born of modern experience and thought, has been injected into the system, not only render-ing the schools effective for good, but popularfixing them and bringing the people to authority as to our mineral resources and geother support. The effect has not logical formations in their phases. But now, stopped with the public schools, but new energy and life has been injused into the mand, is wholly out of print and cannot be obentire fabric, increasing facilities, bringing tained. It would appear that the time has the people into a more intelligent appreciation come for a new edition of this work, an edition of the importance of educating their children, which shall embrace in a simple, practical natil schools of all classes are multiplied, do infinitely better and more general work, reach- original work but all the mass of new facts and ing into remotest confines and bringing all the material which has been gathered and has ac-children of all the people within its benedits. cumulated from year to year since 1869. The When that end is entirely reached, in my opinion, the greatest and most beneficent boon ble consideration, within the province of the State to besiow will have been conferred upon her people.

go too far in enacting laws for the encouragenent of education, and especially the extenon and perfection of our public school system. It is significant that in the counties in which the schools are most liberally sustained, better presperity obtains and the people are happier and better off, and in view of the fact that the determination of the amount of tax that shall be levied for this purpose, it would perhaps lead to more liberal provisions being made if your honorable bodies should, by resolution or otherwise, counsel the County Courts to greater liberality in those counties that seem not to be

in pace with the advanced educational thought and effort that is obtaining all over the land. UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE. The most wonderful and gratifying resuscitation that ever came within my knowledge is the rehabilitation of the University of Tennessees. Four years ago I found it almost literally in ruins, with buildings decaying, its work languishing and almost ready to succumb. Immediately Dr. Charles W. Dabney, Jr., was called to its management, and within this short period, by means of most superior tact and energy, with an ability and a knowledge of mod-

resentatives and servants of the people, cannot

ern educational expedient rarely equalled, be has brought order from chaos, and by resort to excellent financial strategem, has builded and added and enlarged until he has made it a model nodern institution, inferior to none in the South-an institution that should be the pride of every Tennessean, worthy of unlimited patronage and fully able to confer the highest order of educational benefit. Dr. Dabney has been ably sustained and assisted by a splendid faculty and an eminently wide-awake Board of Trustees, who, while sharing with him the abors that have accomplished the miraculous results and entitled to proportionate honors,

naster hand in the great work.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT. This department has undergone a revolution in its methods and purposes within the past four years. When I came into office I found that there was a disposition to abolish it altogether, but the present commissioner, Hon. B. M. Hord, immediately set about making it an instrument of benefit to the farming classes, and so abundant have been these benefits that it now commends itself as an indispensable adjunct of State Government. I am of the opinon, however, that the time has arrived when attention and divide its effort toward the accomplishment of immigration, and to that end more liberal appropriation should be allowed kind as will attract immigration and investment. There should be better matured plans more rigidly prosecuted, and the results I am ersnaded will more than requite the expenditure and effort. The department has been excellently and honorably managed and much good has resulted, but its scope may be profitably widened and its benefits multiplied if your honorable bodies take the view of it here suggested and provide the means and direct its ac-

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY. In view of the great interest the immense rethe work of the Geological Survey of the State, presented in proper form to the people of the State and of the world. It is anomalous that while work has been done and reports in due time presented, the Legislature has neglected to make any provision for their publication No report has been printed since the appearance of Dr. Safford's "Geology of Tennessee" matter is recommended to you for your favora-

THE MILITARY. The report of the Adjutant-General shows The General Assembly of Tennessee, rep. | a decrease in the number of volunteers in the

depends upon the patriotism and enthusiasm of our young men, and that has been dampened by the failure of the State to make adequate provision to sustain it. It has been the purpose to enlist large numbers, the appropriat from the National Government being limite and the reduction in numbers was made with law as it now exists leaves to the counties the a view to increased efficiency. The guard now is in amply efficient condition meet any demand the State may make for its services, but there are not adequate means and facilities at hand to foster and keep alive a general interest. If the military spirit is to be fastered more adequate appropriation should be made and the Adjutant-General should be relieved of the duties of Private Secretary to the Governor. He has been forced to subordinate the military interests to his other duties for lack of time properly to attend to both. With an Adjutant-General who can give undivided attention to his duties and an appropriation sufficient to cover the expenses of an annual encampment, efficiency of the Guard is

ELECTION LAWS. Our system of election laws have already been found to be defective in some minor details that can be easily remedied. That their tendency is to secure a fairer and fuller expression of in telligent popular will is already demonstrated, and they should be cured of such defects as exist. I call your honorable bodies' attention particularly to the loose provisions respecting the exhibition of poli-tax receipts. The law provides that the judges of election must be satisfied that the citizen offering his ballot has paid his poll tax, and it is claimed that in some counties it has been almost altogether evaded the judges accepting all ballots presented, taking it for granted the voter has paid his poll and taking his presentation of his ballot as an assertion of that fact, with which they profess yield to him the superior credit of being the to be satisfied. The law should be amended so as to provide that the Trustee or Assessor shall make out a full list of all persons who have paid their polls up to a time stated, say the day preceding, and furnish such list to the election officers, and providing that no man shall be permitted to vote who is not thus shown to be

A conflict is impending between Federal and and State authorities in the management of elections, which, in my opinion, if persisted in, breatens the stability of the Republic. I have no fear but that, whatever the temporary disposition of this question may be, in the end the ntelligence and patriotism of the people will prevail, and the right of the State to the sole nanagement of elections be maintained. In the meantime it behooves us to perfect our laws with a view to rigid and exact fairness, and a full, free and intelligent expression of the will of the people, and boldly maintain and execute them fairly and imparitally, thus forestalling any reason for Federal interference and stoutly maintaining the sole right of the State to control this, its own affair.

THE WORLD'S EXPOSITION. The World's Columbian Exposition to be held n the city of Chicago in 1898 will be the grandest international and national expedition ever held on earth. Other States are already begining to prepare for a proper representation of their products and resources, and Tennessee cannot afford to neglect this opportunity to adsources of the State have assumed, and the vertise herself to the world. Apart from the great and pressing demand for information patriotic motives that should animate us to asbefore the assembled intelligence of the world such evidences of our wealth and capabilities and especially to the importance of having the such evidences of our wealth and capabilities reports and results of each work published and as will result largely to our benefit, and the amount of effort we exert will be the measure of the benefits derived. A large appropriation for this purpose will be money loaned at great interest. I present herewith certain suggestions matured by the commission which will aid your honorable bodies in perfecting the initial work, and a copy of a bill carefully in 1869. Since that this has been the great | drawn which has been presented to all the States to secure uniformity of action. They may serve to guide your committees if you should determine to act in the premises.

CHICKAMAUGA PARK. The United States Government has made provisions for the establishment of a National military park at the battlefield of Chickamauga at Chattanooga. Ample appropriations have been made to establish a park that will markable battles in the annals of war, but the ommissioners have proceeded as far as they can until the State of Tennessee shall cede to

CONTINUED TO FOURTH PAGE.]

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